

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

[Columbia, South Carolina]

HEARING #18-11711

MARCH 15, 2018

6:00 P.M.

DOCKET NO. 2017-292-WS:

CAROLINA WATER SERVICE, INC. – Application for Approval of an
Increase in Its Rates for Water and Sewer ServicesTRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY
AND PROCEEDINGS

VOLUME 3

HEARING BEFORE: Swain E. WHITFIELD, CHAIRMAN; Comer H.
‘Randy’ RANDALL, VICE CHAIRMAN; and COMMISSIONERS
John E. ‘Butch’ HOWARD, Elliott F. ELAM, Jr.,
Elizabeth B. ‘Lib’ FLEMING, Robert T. ‘Bob’
BOCKMAN, and G. O’Neal HAMILTON

ADVISOR TO COMMISSION: B. Randall Dong, Esq.
LEGAL ADVISORY STAFF

STAFF: Jocelyn G. Boyd, Chief Clerk/Administrator; James
Spearman, Ph.D., Executive Assistant to Commissioners; William O.
Richardson and John Powers, Technical Advisory Staff; Afton
Ellison, Clerk’s Staff; Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-CM/M-GNSC, Court
Reporter; and Calvin Woods, Hearing Room Assistant.

APPEARANCES:

SCOTT ELLIOTT, ESQUIRE, representing CAROLINA
WATER COMPANY, INC., APPLICANT

LAURA P. VALTORTA, ESQUIRE, representing FORTY
LOVE POINT HOMEOWNERS’ ASSOCIATION, INTERVENOR

JEFFREY M. NELSON, ESQUIRE, and **FLORENCE P.
BELSER, ESQUIRE**, representing THE SOUTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF
REGULATORY STAFF

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

101 EXECUTIVE CENTER DRIVE
COLUMBIA, SC 29210

POST OFFICE BOX 11649
COLUMBIA, SC 29211

WWW.PSC.SC.GOV

I N D E X

	PAGE
<u>OPENING MATTERS</u>	126-133
Mr. Nelson.....	127
Mr. Elliott.....	130
Ms. Valtorta.....	131
16. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS WILLIAM C. HAMMOND</u>	133
Hearing Exhibit 5-B marked/received	
[Submission in conjunction with testimony].	135
Examination by Commissioner Fleming.....	136
17. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS KAREN CADDELL</u>	137
Cross Examination by Ms. Valtorta.....	142
Examination by Commissioner Fleming.....	144
18. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS JEAN WAUGH</u>	147
Cross Examination by Mr. Nelson.....	150
Examination by Commissioner Elam.....	153
19. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS BRUCE JACKY</u>	155
Cross Examination by Ms. Valtorta.....	157
Examination by Commissioner Fleming.....	158
Examination by Chairman Whitfield.....	159
20. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS CARL BARTLETT</u>	160
Examination by Commissioner Howard.....	166
Examination by Commissioner Fleming.....	169
21. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS ROSAMOND TAUBE</u>	172
22. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS ALBERTA COIT</u>	175
Cross Examination by Ms. Valtorta.....	178
Examination by Chairman Whitfield.....	180

	PAGE
23. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS JAMES A. BELL</u>	182
24. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS JOEL NEELY</u>	187
Cross Examination by Mr. Nelson.....	191
Examination by Chairman Whitfield.....	194
25. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS JOYCE FLEMING</u>	195
26. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS MARIE ATKINSON</u>	202
Examination by Commissioner Fleming.....	206
27. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS CHARLES MELTON</u>	207
Cross Examination by Mr. Nelson.....	209
28. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS SUSAN GROSSMAN</u>	210
Cross Examination by Mr. Nelson.....	211
29. <u>TESTIMONY of PUBLIC WITNESS DENA MARLOW</u>	212
<u>CLOSING MATTERS</u>	216-217
Hearing Exhibit No. 6 marked/received [Sign-In Sheets].....	217
<u>REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE</u>	218

P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Please be seated. I'll call the public hearing to order and ask our attorney, Mr. Dong, to read the docket.

MR. DONG: Good evening. This is the Application of Carolina Water Service, Incorporated, for an adjustment to rates and charges, and modifications to certain terms and conditions for the provision of water and sewer service, Docket No. 2017-292-WS.

I've got a few things that I'm going to ask you to do, or talk about. First, I want to ask you all to please silence your cell phones.

You all have signed in. Please decide whether you want to speak tonight or at the merits hearing. And if you change your mind, if you decide that you did want to speak or that you didn't, you need to go back and change that sign-in. That helps us keep a better record of who has spoken and who hasn't. We are asking everyone to only speak once; that is, speak either tonight or at the merits hearing. Either way, it's treated the same way, so there's no difference. They both go into the record.

We are limiting public witnesses to three

1 minutes. That way, we can allow everyone who needs
2 to speak to have their say. And I'm going to call
3 people up by name and ask you to come forward and
4 wait to be sworn in. And after you testify, please
5 keep your seat until you're dismissed by the
6 Chairman, because they may have questions for you.

7 I think either Mr. Nelson or Ms. Belser has
8 further instructions.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Dong.

10 Now we'll call on South Carolina Office of
11 Regulatory Staff, Mr. Nelson, to give us some
12 instructions governing tonight's hearing.

13 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 Welcome, everybody. I'm glad y'all came out
15 to speak tonight. My name is Jeff Nelson. I'm an
16 attorney with the Office of Regulatory Staff here
17 in Columbia. With me tonight is Ms. Florence
18 Belser. Ms. Belser is also in the Legal Department
19 at ORS.

20 We're here tonight to hear comments, and the
21 Commission has set this hearing to allow the
22 public, the customers of the system, to come and
23 comment on the requested rate increase.

24 When you come up here, you'll be sworn in by
25 Mr. Richardson, I believe, who is right in front of

1 me here, and you will have to testify. Everything
2 that you say will go on the record. Ms. Wheat, our
3 court reporter up here, is going to take down
4 everything that you say, and that's going to be
5 part of the record that goes into the case for the
6 Commission to consider, in consideration of the
7 rate increase that's been asked for by CWS here.

8 Just to explain, too, my office, the Office of
9 Regulatory Staff, is a separate State agency from
10 the Public Service Commission. And part of our job
11 is dealing with the public, so what we would like
12 to do is – you can't ask the Commissioners
13 questions, because they sit as what's called a
14 quasi-judicial body; it's the same thing as if
15 there were a judge sitting up here and you were
16 called as a witness. Witnesses can't ask questions
17 of a judge during a case. But we're a party. And
18 we want to welcome you to come and talk to us,
19 either tonight after the hearing or at any other
20 time, and I'm going to give you some contact
21 information, as well. I believe Ms. Hoffman, from
22 our office, has some information, as well, that has
23 our Consumer Services number for our office.

24 So I'm going to introduce a couple of other
25 people here, too: Matt Schellinger, who is also

1 with the Office of Regulatory Staff; he's with our
2 Rates Department. And Ms. Hoffman, who is sitting
3 down here, is also with the Office of Regulatory
4 Staff. So, at the conclusion of the hearing
5 tonight, if there's anything that you hear tonight,
6 that you have any questions about, or anything else
7 you want to know about the case and what's going on
8 with it, come see myself, Ms. Belser, Mr.
9 Schellinger, or Ms. Hoffman, and we'll be happy to
10 talk to you. Okay?

11 Contact information, like I said, I believe
12 Ms. Hoffman has some cards with her. Our number
13 for Consumer Services is 1-800-922-1531. You can
14 take that down, or just come and see me afterwards.

15 Please remember, also, that when you speak
16 tonight, because this is being taken on the record,
17 that you need to verbalize responses. If the
18 Commissioners, myself, or Mr. Elliott for CWS ask
19 you any questions tonight, make sure – you can't
20 just shake your head or something; you have to say
21 yes or no, so that Ms. Wheat can take it down to be
22 part of the record tonight.

23 I think that's all I've got. Ms. Valtorta is
24 here also. Ms. Valtorta is an Intervenor on behalf
25 of Forty Love Homeowners' Association, so they're a

1 party to this case, as well.

2 That's all I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

4 At this time, as Mr. Nelson mentioned, when
5 you come up to give your testimony, we'll ask you
6 to remain around and see if there are any
7 questions. So I'm going to introduce the – take
8 appearances from all the parties in this
9 proceeding, so you'll know who – if there are any
10 questions from them, you'll know who they are.

11 So at this time I'll start with the company.
12 Mr. Elliott, if you could make your appearance?

13 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Mr. Chairman, I'm Scott Elliott.
14 I represent Carolina Water Service, in this docket.

15 I might mention, while I have the floor, that
16 present is Catherine Heigel, who is the new
17 Carolina Water Service president, and her staff.
18 And we would, like the ORS, offer everyone in the
19 room to speak to us at the end of the proceeding,
20 if they have questions. Thank you.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Elliott, could you
22 also get the other employees maybe to raise their
23 hand, so the folks can see who they are?

24 **COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES:** [Indicating.]

25 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** After the hearing, you

1 can – we can't be a part of it, but after the
2 hearing, Mr. Nelson has offered the ORS Staff and
3 now Mr. Elliott has offered the staff from the
4 company. So you have some great resources here
5 tonight. In addition to being able to give your
6 testimony, after the hearing is over, they've
7 offered to hang around and talk with you. So I
8 encourage you to do so, if you would like to do so.

9 Mr. Elliott, anything –

10 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No, sir, just to say we'll be
11 here as long as it takes.

12 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, sir.

13 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Thank you, sir.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Other Intervenors in the
15 case – as Mr. Nelson mentioned, Ms. Valtorta, if
16 you would make your appearance, please?

17 **MS. VALTORTA:** I'm Laura Valtorta, and I
18 represent the Forty Love Point Homeowners'
19 Association, and we intervened in this case as a
20 party.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Valtorta.

22 I know the other night, we had Mr. Knowlton as
23 a pro se. I don't think he's here again; I know
24 he's up in the York County area. Also, we had Mr.
25 Kendree, representing York County, who has also

1 intervened. I don't see either one of those
2 parties here tonight.

3 So, with that, Mr. Dong, I'm going to turn it
4 back over to you.

5 **MR. DONG:** The first witness I'm calling is
6 William Hammond. And just so that we keep things
7 moving, I'll go ahead and give the next name: Karen
8 Caddell. And – [indicating].

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** I'll do that, Mr. Dong.

10 Before we call the first witness, typically,
11 at a night hearing, we do introduce the
12 Commissioners, and I failed to do that. So I'm
13 going to do that at this time. To my far right, we
14 have Commissioner Elliott Elam, representing the
15 Second District. Next to him, we have Commissioner
16 Bob Bockman, representing the Sixth District.
17 Right to my right, we have Commissioner Lib
18 Fleming, representing the Fourth District. To my
19 far left, we have Commissioner Butch Howard,
20 representing the First District. Next to him, we
21 have Commissioner O'Neal Hamilton, representing the
22 Seventh District. Next to him, we have
23 Commissioner Randy Randall, also our Vice Chairman,
24 and representing the Third District. And as you
25 already heard, we have our attorney, Mr. Randall

1 Dong, beside me. And I'm Swain Whitfield; I'm the
2 Chairman, and I represent the Fifth District.

3 So, Mr. Dong, if you would, call our first
4 witness, please.

5 **MR. DONG:** Again, Mr. Hammond and Ms. Caddell.

6 [Witness affirmed]

7 THEREUPON came,

8 **W I L L I A M C . H A M M O N D ,**

9 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

10 **MR. RICHARDSON:** Please state your name and
11 address for us.

12 **WITNESS:** William C. Hammond, 254 Maple Road,
13 Lexington. And I've got packets here for
14 everybody, if they're wanted, just documentation.

15 We were a little shocked at the Town of
16 Lexington taking over the sewer service and, you
17 know, I think it's a good thing because it stops
18 the pollution. But now, with the rate increase –
19 asking for the rate increase on the water, the Town
20 of Lexington has got a cheaper rate than what CWS
21 is asking for. So if we could get the Town of
22 Lexington's water, also, that would save us more
23 money than paying CWS for their rate increase.

24 So I'm asking, if you consider giving them a
25 rate increase, that you turn us over to the Town of

1 Lexington.

2 That's really all I have, because they're
3 purchasing water from the City of West Columbia
4 right now, supplying us with the water from West
5 Columbia.

6 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Hammond, does that
7 conclude your testimony?

8 **WITNESS:** Yes, sir.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** If you'll wait just one
10 second, let me see if there are any questions.

11 Mr. Elliott, any questions for this witness?

12 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Mr. Hammond. I
13 appreciate him coming out.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Hang on one second, Mr.
15 Hammond. One second. I want to check with the
16 rest of the folks.

17 Mr. Nelson?

18 **MR. NELSON:** I would ask that – Mr. Hammond
19 indicated he's got a packet of information?

20 **WITNESS:** Yes, sir.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** I was about to ask him if
22 he wanted to – go ahead, Mr. Nelson.

23 **MR. NELSON:** I would ask that Mr. Hammond's
24 information – I'm not sure what it is – that it be
25 placed into the record.

1 **WITNESS:** It's charts of the Town of Lexington
2 and they're just things – the rate increase, there,
3 showing everything that they are asking for.

4 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, are you
5 moving for that to be entered in?

6 **MR. NELSON:** Yes, sir.

7 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. We are going to
8 enter that in as Hearing Exhibit No. 5_[see Exh. 5-B].
9 There are some other exhibits from previous night
10 hearings.

11 [WHEREUPON, Hearing Exhibit No. 5-B was
12 marked and received in evidence.]

13 And did you have another question for this
14 witness, Mr. Nelson, or ORS?

15 **MR. NELSON:** No questions. Thank you, Mr.
16 Hammond.

17 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. Well, hang on one
18 second.

19 Ms. Valtorta, any questions for this witness?

20 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, any
22 questions for Mr. Hammond, from any Commissioners?
23 Commissioner Fleming.

24 <

25 <

EXAMINATION**BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

Q Yes, Mr. Hammond, have you talked to the City of Lexington about the water situation?

A No, ma'am, I have not.

Q Okay. And what do you – I haven't seen your folder yet. Do you just have information about the –

A Right.

Q – City of Lexington?

A Right. And the City of Lexington comes all the way to Laurel Road, which is not far from Maple. So it wouldn't be a large tie-in to the Carolina Water Service water line. I don't know what the expense would be, but I do know that the rate increase that CWS is asking for is more than the out-of-town rate that the Town of Lexington charges.

Q Are you – but other than the cost, are you pleased with the service that you're getting from CWS?

A We have been with CWS since 1978. In '78, we moved to Lexington. And Lewis Wright Realty told us at that time the County was talking about a regional water and sewer service. The rates were high at that – in '78. We were paying every two months at that time, and it was over \$100 – almost \$150 every two months. So we have been paying exorbitant rates since 1978. And, you know, they

1 keep asking for more and more money, so I – we're on a
2 fixed income. I'm retired and, you know, it's tough.

3 **Q** But the quality of service –

4 **A** The quality of service has been fine. It has. We
5 haven't had any water outages. We did have bad water
6 for a while, and they tied us into West Columbia Water,
7 and that cleared that up.

8 **COMMISSIONER FLEMING:** Okay. Thank you.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Commissioner
10 Fleming.

11 Any other Commissioner questions for Mr.
12 Hammond?

13 [No response]

14 Well, hearing none, Mr. Hammond, you may step
15 down, and thank you for your testimony.

16 **WITNESS:** Thank you.

17 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

18 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Dong, next witness.

19 **MR. DONG:** Karen Caddell. And the next one
20 up, after Ms. Caddell, is Jean Waugh.

21 [Witness affirmed]

22 THEREUPON came,

23 **K A R E N C A D D E L L ,**

24 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

25 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address,

1 please.

2 **WITNESS:** My name is Karen Caddell and I live
3 in the community of Friarsgate, in Lexington
4 County, 631 North Royal Tower Drive.

5 I'm nervous talking in front of people, so if
6 I say anything, my apologies.

7 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** You just take your time
8 and you keep that microphone close, and we're going
9 to be just fine.

10 **WITNESS:** I have sewer with Carolina Water
11 Service, and that's all. I do not have water. I
12 have City of Columbia water. So what comes in's
13 City of Columbia, what goes out's Carolina Water
14 Service.

15 My concern is about their performance.
16 They've got a history of over 20 years of
17 violations and, according to Bill Stangler, the
18 Congaree Riverkeeper, in the last three years –
19 2015 through '17 – they've had 40 spills of over
20 74,000 gallons. In 2017 alone, they had 14 spills
21 of over 20,000 gallons. But they're only required
22 to report spills in excess of 500 gallons, so
23 there's unreported spills.

24 They were forced to stop discharge at the I-20
25 Plant after a six-year legal battle with the

1 Congaree Riverkeeper. Judge Seymour said that they
2 violated federal pollution discharge limits at
3 least 23 different times, and the company kept its
4 I-20 Plant open for 17 years after it was required
5 to connect to a regional sewer system, which they
6 did not. So my understanding is now that's
7 Lexington. And this is just the I-20 Plant. Then
8 she fined them \$1½ million.

9 So, now there's the Friarsgate Plant, and
10 that's my plant. In 2016 they had a spill that
11 lasted 10 days and it caused swimming advisories –
12 and this is during the summer, including July 4th,
13 so that essentially closed the Saluda River to
14 recreational activities over the summer holiday.

15 Six local businesses – River Runner, Adventure
16 Carolina, the recreational kinds of companies,
17 local businesses that make their living from water
18 activities – are now suing for damages because of
19 the river pollution from CWS, and this is in the
20 wake of the 2016 Friarsgate Plant spill. River-
21 related businesses said that they would continue to
22 suffer because customers, people that use the
23 river, they don't forget, and they don't trust the
24 river environment to be safe. And considering
25 Carolina Water Service's spill history, rightly so.

1 The recreation, health, environment, aquatic
2 life, and economy all suffer negative consequences
3 from the impact of CWS, from their performance.
4 And it just doesn't go away or magically dissipate.
5 We are left with the damage.

6 And so, let me shift into the money part, and
7 so, we're paying for the service. We pay for the
8 pollution in other ways, but we pay directly out of
9 our pockets for the service. So, two years ago,
10 they worked on the Friarsgate Plant, and we're
11 paying, for that, \$593,000. But during that 17
12 years that they didn't hook up to a regional
13 system, there was a four-year stretch – and this
14 was from Judge Seymour in that order when she fined
15 them \$1½ million – she said the company gained an
16 economic benefit of \$689,000 annually, in a four-
17 year stretch, so that's \$689,000 times four; that's
18 over \$2¾ million. So where did that go? I think
19 maybe that could be used for improvements, instead
20 of a rate increase.

21 And Catherine Heigel said that Carolina Water
22 Service's goal is to be free of the Friarsgate
23 Plant in one or two years, so are they increasing
24 the revenue to make a sale more appealing and
25 profitable? And would that be at the expense of

1 customers who are left with a bloated rate on top
2 of the damage of the spills?

3 So, in Friarsgate, there's – my understanding
4 is that there's 30 homes that don't have sewer
5 service because they can't afford it. So, my bill,
6 as a single-family dwelling – and in my case, a
7 single-person dwelling – four years ago, I paid
8 \$40; and with this increase, I would be paying
9 almost \$70 a month for sewer only. That's a 75
10 percent increase in four years. That's kind of
11 tough to absorb. That's \$840 annually for just
12 sewer, for a single-family dwelling.

13 And I think that your mission statement – the
14 Public Service Commission mission statement –
15 begins with "To serve the public of South
16 Carolina," and I'd like to see that happen and take
17 that, you know, the financial consideration, to
18 heart and look at that compared to maybe what their
19 profits are and what their performance has been,
20 before you grant this rate increase.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Caddell.
22 Does that conclude your testimony?

23 **WITNESS:** It does.

24 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. If you'll bear
25 with us just a minute.

Mr. Elliott, any questions for this witness?

MR. ELLIOTT: No, sir, but I thank Ms. Caddell for coming out.

WITNESS: You're welcome.

CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Ms. Valtorta, any questions for this witness?

MS. VALTORTA: Yes.

CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Could you go to a microphone, Ms. Valtorta, or the – that would be fine.

MS. VALTORTA: [Indicating.]

CROSS EXAMINATION

BY MS. VALTORTA:

Q What kind of sewer system, wastewater system, do you have at your house? Is it a LET system or is it a gravitational system? And does it work? I mean, do you have waste backup?

A It works. I don't know the answer to the first part of your question.

Q Okay.

A I don't know the type of system. It – the pipe goes out of my house; there's one of those caps in my yard where, if it backs up, it blows out the cap.

Q Okay, that answers my question. And you don't have – you don't have any problems with it, like, sewage backup

1 or anything?

2 **A** It did one time, and the section of the pipe had to be
3 replaced.

4 **Q** That was at your house?

5 **A** Yes.

6 **Q** What about your neighbors?

7 **A** Neighbors – people in the community have complained
8 about a smell and – but I don't – I have smelled a smell
9 from time to time in walking and riding my bike around
10 the neighborhood. I can't remember exactly where it is.
11 And I don't know exactly where it is that the people who
12 have voiced complaints is – I hope they're here tonight.

13 **Q** Thank you.

14 **A** You're welcome.

15 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Valtorta.

16 Mr. Nelson, questions from the Office of
17 Regulatory Staff?

18 **MR. NELSON:** Ms. Caddell, I'm guessing that
19 the spelling of your name is C-a-d-e-l-l?

20 **WITNESS:** Two Ds.

21 **MR. NELSON:** Two Ds. Thank you, very much.
22 And I think you did a very excellent job of
23 speaking. Thank you, very much.

24 **WITNESS:** Thank you. If I can just make it to
25 my seat now.

[Laughter]

CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Well, hang on one second, Ms. Caddell. One second, and let me see if Commissioners have – Commissioners, any questions of Ms. Caddell? Commissioner Fleming.

EXAMINATION

BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:

Q Good evening.

A Hi.

Q I also want to thank you for the information you've given us.

A Thank you.

Q And is your sewer bill \$40 presently?

A No, no.

Q What is it now?

A Right now, it's almost \$58 a month. There was an increase two years ago. And this is – I looked back in my financial records, and four years ago I was paying \$40 a month. And it went to \$45, but I didn't print that out, so I don't know exactly when that happened. And then it went to – I think it went from \$45 to fifty – it might've jumped straight to \$57 or \$58. And so, with this increase, it would push it up to almost \$70 a month, just sewer.

Q Okay. And you said there are 30 homes that are not on –

1 **A** [Nodding head.]

2 **Q** So what have – have they installed septic tanks, or what
3 are –

4 **A** No, I don't – I don't know what they're doing, but in
5 the conversation that I had, that is kind of a worrisome
6 health issue itself.

7 **Q** Okay, but they're not on CWS sewer service.

8 **A** Well, it got cut off. I think they have like an insert
9 that they put in there and then your water can't leave
10 your house. It just, you know, can't go anywhere.

11 **Q** Okay.

12 **A** It can't go into the system.

13 **Q** They're continuing to live there, though?

14 **A** [Nodding head.] I don't know what they're doing,
15 instead.

16 **Q** Okay. So, and talk to me a little bit about the – is it
17 Friarsgate or –

18 **A** Friarsgate.

19 **Q** – Fire, F-i-r-e?

20 **A** Friar-.

21 **Q** With an R, F-r?

22 **A** Uh-huh.

23 **Q** Okay. That plant was to be replaced a number of years
24 ago. Is that my understanding of what you're saying?

25 **A** No, my understanding from Catherine Heigel was that they

1 would like to not have that plant and that their goal
2 was to not have that in the next year or two. She's in
3 the back, so she's here.

4 **Q** So what was the plant that was supposed to be replaced
5 with a regional system?

6 **A** The I-20 Plant.

7 **Q** The I-20 Plant, okay. Thank you. And they continued
8 with the violations even presently, up until 2017; is
9 that correct?

10 **A** Yes.

11 **Q** Okay. And the —

12 **A** 2017 alone, the Congaree Riverkeeper reported 14 spills,
13 20,000-plus gallons.

14 **Q** Okay, thank you.

15 **A** And that doesn't include the ones that are 500 gallons
16 or less.

17 **Q** Okay. All right. Thank you.

18 **A** You're welcome.

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Commissioner
20 Fleming.

21 Any other Commissioner questions for Ms.
22 Caddell?

23 [No response]

24 Well, hearing none, Ms. Caddell, thank you for
25 your testimony, and you may step down. Thank you

1 for your participation.

2 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

3 Mr. Dong, next witness.

4 **MR. DONG:** Jean Waugh.

5 [Witness affirmed]

6 THEREUPON came,

7 **J E A N W A U G H ,**

8 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

9 **MR. RICHARDSON:** Please state your name and
10 address.

11 **WITNESS:** Jean Waugh, and I live in the I-20
12 section, Laurel Meadows.

13 And I'd like to start off by saying,
14 yesterday, I had 29 e-mails, from my little
15 neighborhood thing, about the fact that we had no
16 water yesterday in Laurel Meadows Subdivision. I
17 got a phone call, a phone message, on my answer-
18 phone yesterday, around 1 o'clock, that the water
19 would be off for emergency repairs and that when it
20 came back on, we would have to boil the water, and
21 they would call us when the boil-water advisory was
22 no longer in effect. Not when the water got
23 repaired. So last night, about – oh, I got home –
24 I'd been out of town and I got home about 4
25 o'clock. The water never came back on. About 10

1 o'clock last night, I called Carolina Water
2 Services. Well, I knew I'd get an answering
3 system, but they could care less. I said, "Do you
4 have any idea how long – how much longer the
5 repairs will take?" No, they didn't have any idea
6 how long it would take. They couldn't tell me
7 that. So I went to bed. About 11 o'clock in the
8 morning, my toilet started jumping like they were
9 doing the jitterbug or the jive or something. I
10 mean, the air was coming in, and I honestly thought
11 the toilet might blow a hole in the ceiling. So,
12 apparently, the water came back on about 11:30 last
13 night. I got up this morning and I took a bath. I
14 got ready to go to work, and I was going to wash my
15 hands before I left. No water again, today. I do
16 not know if the water is even on now, because I
17 haven't been home from work.

18 But that's an example of the sorry service
19 that we get and the attitude you get when you try
20 to call them. I can call Mid-Carolina and they are
21 most accommodating and they try to give you an idea
22 of how long it will take them to do something.

23 My water bill is – I'm one person. My water
24 bill is over \$100 a month. My light bill is around
25 \$140 a month. I'm never without lights. I can't

1 drink the water; it's so discolored, I cannot drink
2 the water. And I don't — I don't have any answer
3 for it, but they claim they've made all these
4 improvements. I've seen no improvements. I've
5 lived out there since the early '70s. I've been to
6 Public Service meetings before; I've testified
7 before. But every time they want a rate increase,
8 they get it. Whatever they want, they get.

9 And my idea of Ms. Heigel going from DHEC over
10 to Carolina Water Service, that's like the fox
11 watching the henhouse. I just think it's all
12 involved together, and it's a political thing. And
13 the customers are never going to get any relief.
14 We are, a lot of us, are living on fixed incomes.
15 I am. But I have to work part-time to supplement
16 my income, just to pay all these exorbitant fees.

17 And that's all I have to say, I guess.

18 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Well, Ms. Waugh, if
19 you'll bear with us just a minute, and let me see
20 if there are any questions.

21 Mr. Elliott, any questions for Ms. Waugh?

22 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Mr. Chairman, I have no
23 questions, but may I impose on —

24 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Could you get to a
25 microphone, Mr. Elliott?

1 **MR. ELLIOTT:** [Indicating.] I've got no
2 questions, and I appreciate Ms. Waugh coming out.
3 But could I ask for a spelling of her name and a
4 street address?

5 **WITNESS:** Yes. Jean, J-e-a-n, Waugh, W-a-u-g-h.

6 **MR. ELLIOTT:** All right. That's what I've
7 got. And how about your street address?

8 **WITNESS:** And I'm at 306 Northview - -v-i-e-w
9 - Road, in Laurel Meadows. That's West Columbia.

10 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Yes, ma'am.

11 **WITNESS:** 29169.

12 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Thank you.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Any other questions for
15 her, Mr. Elliott?

16 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions. I appreciate Ms.
17 Waugh coming out.

18 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, any
19 questions for this witness?

20 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, questions
22 from the Office of Regulatory Staff?

23 **CROSS EXAMINATION**

24 **BY MR. NELSON:**

25 **Q** Yes, ma'am, I do. You talked to - you gave us a pretty

1 good description of this latest occurrence. Is this
2 something that happens on a semi-frequent basis?

3 **A** This happens on a semi-regular basis.

4 **Q** So this –

5 **A** It's not like –

6 **Q** – isn't the first time.

7 **A** – every month, but every several months we'll have this,
8 and we'll not have water for a day. The first instance
9 was when I first moved out there. My father-in-law
10 died; I was in Greenville for a week. This is in the
11 '70s. We came home, and we didn't have water that time
12 for a whole week. And then when you call them, it's not
13 like they're concerned; it's like, "We can't do anything
14 about it. We're working on it." You know, at least
15 show a little empathy.

16 **Q** Yeah. Now, you talked about the water a little bit,
17 too, about being cloudy, because I think you said you
18 can't – you don't feel like you can drink the water; is
19 that right?

20 **A** I cannot drink the water. No, I can't. My toilet's
21 discolored from it, my sinks are discolored from it. I
22 have to take those little scrubby things and scrub
23 myself to death just to get them cleaned up enough.
24 It's not like you can spray scrubbing bubbles on it and
25 it'll wash away. It won't.

1 **Q** Do you have any idea where they get the water from? Do
2 they – do you know if they buy it from somebody else, or
3 is this a well?

4 **A** There is a cesspool in the back of our neighborhood.
5 I'm assuming they recycle it from there; I don't really
6 know. I couldn't tell you that.

7 **Q** So you get water service from CWS. Do you also get
8 sewer service from CWS, or do you get that –

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Waugh, could you pull
10 that microphone just a little bit closer –

11 **WITNESS:** Okay [indicating].

12 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** – so our court reporter
13 can hear you?

14 **WITNESS:** Okay.

15 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

16 **BY MR. NELSON:**

17 **Q** Do you also get your sewer service from them, or is it
18 just the water?

19 **A** Oh, yes, we get the sewer service from them, and \$65 – I
20 mean, \$69 a month, to flush the toilet. And then they
21 said, "Well, you're going to Lexington, but you have to
22 apply to Lexington." So why would I have to apply to
23 Lexington if I didn't have a choice to go anywhere else?
24 That didn't make any sense to me, either.

25 **Q** Well, do you have any particular issues like you did

1 with the water, with the sewer service?

2 **A** It just went to Lexington. I just paid the first bill.
3 So I don't know.

4 **Q** So you're on the I-20 system?

5 **A** I'm on that I-20 and that seems to be a big to-do there.

6 **Q** Thank you, ma'am. I really appreciate you coming out
7 tonight.

8 **A** Okay.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Any Commissioners, any
10 questions for Ms. Waugh, of this witness?
11 Commissioner Elam.

12 **EXAMINATION**

13 **BY COMMISSIONER ELAM:**

14 **Q** Good evening. Thank you for coming. Is the discolored
15 water all the time, or is it just maybe related to some
16 of these outages?

17 **A** The color of the water? I don't know, because – like I
18 said, I will not drink it. Anytime I get it, it'll have
19 sediments in it or something like that. But I do wash
20 dishes and stuff like that in it.

21 **Q** Okay. So you can't really tell whether it's cloudy all
22 the time?

23 **A** I can't tell you that it's cloudy all the time, because
24 I don't drink it. I drink bottled water.

25 **COMMISSIONER ELAM:** Okay, thank you.

1 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Commissioner
2 Elam.

3 Any other Commissioner questions for Ms.
4 Waugh?

5 [No response]

6 Well, if not, Ms. Waugh, we thank you for your
7 testimony and, as has been stated already tonight,
8 State law prohibits us from answering your
9 questions, but, also, as has been stated by the
10 company and by Mr. Nelson, there's many
11 representatives here tonight that might be willing
12 to stay after – they've stated they're willing to
13 stay after and talk to you. And this Commission is
14 concerned; however, we can't answer your questions,
15 but there are a lot of people here tonight who can
16 answer your questions. And Mr. Nelson has already
17 asked you a lot of questions. So I would encourage
18 you to take advantage of the opportunity of the
19 representatives from both ORS and the company that
20 are in the room, tonight, and maybe get some of
21 your questions answered. And thank you for your
22 testimony.

23 **WITNESS:** Okay.

24 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

25 **MR. DONG:** Bruce Jacky?

[Witness affirmed]

THEREUPON came,

B R U C E J A C K Y ,

who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

MR. RICHARDSON: State your name and address for us.

WITNESS: My name is Bruce Jacky. I live at 228 Forecastle Court, Lexington, South Carolina. I live in The Landings Subdivision.

I'm here to represent not only myself but our homeowners' association. I am on the board. We have reviewed the requested rate increases and we disagree with them.

The Landing Subdivision has about 180 homes. With those, in that 180 homes, we've got four phases of that subdivision, and we all have what's called a LET system. We also get sewer and water from Carolina Water, but we have a LET system, and Carolina Water used to help us out in cleaning out the LET and the septic tanks, but now all the homeowners are responsible for maintaining that septic tank. Carolina Water also – a lot of our water is treated and transported by distribution plant, by Lexington County. It's a joint effort.

So, basically, we are just disagreeing with

1 these rate increases. We have seen rate increases
2 since 2011, every two years it seems. So as a
3 resident and a representative of our board, we wish
4 to oppose this.

5 Thank you for your service to the public and
6 allowing us to express our position and concern.
7 That's all I have.

8 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Jacky.
9 Does that conclude your testimony?

10 **WITNESS:** Yes, it does.

11 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, sir. Well, if
12 you'll bear with us just a minute.

13 Mr. Elliott, any questions for Mr. Jacky?

14 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions, but may I ask for
15 the spelling of his last name.

16 **WITNESS:** It's J-a-c-k-y.

17 **MR. ELLIOTT:** I appreciate you coming out.
18 Thank you, Mr. Jacky.

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** All right. Ms. Valtorta,
20 any questions for this witness?

21 **MS. VALTORTA:** Yes.

22 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Could you get that
23 microphone on, please, Ms. Valtorta?

24 **MS. VALTORTA:** [Indicating.]
25 <

CROSS EXAMINATION**BY MS. VALTORTA:**

Q Is that LET system functioning okay, in your neighborhood? I mean, do you –

A I've had to clean out our septic tank several times. The first time I had to clean it out, I just called Carolina Water.

Q I mean, how often do you have to do that?

A I think I did about six years ago. But I see a septic truck out there every now and then. But it does – we've had neighbors back up. In fact, my neighbor, about two weeks ago, had to get his dug up. He called Carolina Water Service, and they referred and said, "You need to contact a local septic company." And they came out, and he had to get it cleaned out.

Q Are any of your houses on the water, like Lake Murray?

A We do. Some of our – we have – it's kind of like a point that sticks out, and there are a lot of houses that are on the water. A good majority of them are in the interior.

Q Okay. Thank you, very much.

A Uh-huh.

CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Thank you, Ms. Valtorta.

Mr. Nelson, Office of Regulatory Staff.

MR. NELSON: I don't have any questions, but

1 thank you, Mr. Jacky, for coming out. Appreciate
2 it.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, any
4 questions for Mr. Jacky? Commissioner Fleming.

5 **EXAMINATION**

6 **BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

7 **Q** Yes, talk to me a little bit about the LET system. You
8 are paying for sewer?

9 **A** Paying for sewer and water, but our sewer system – when
10 I moved in, I didn't really realize it but we had a
11 septic tank that sits in the back. It's kind of a split
12 system, a split sewer system. So, you know, I don't
13 want to get too graphic with it, but it does basically
14 treat the sewage and then it goes out to a smaller pipe
15 and then out, and it's treated later on.

16 **Q** So, you're paying for it once it leaves your septic
17 tank?

18 **A** Yes.

19 **Q** That's what you're paying for, with –

20 **A** That's correct.

21 **Q** And, earlier, Carolina Water Service would clean out the
22 septic tank, as part of –

23 **A** That was my – when I had an issue, I called Carolina
24 Water and they came out, or they sent somebody out. My
25 neighbor just had his, and he tried calling Carolina

1 Water, and they referred and said that they no longer
2 take care of that; the homeowner's responsible for
3 calling a septic cleaning service.

4 **Q** So, there was no notification that they had stopped –

5 **A** I have not received notification. He found that out by
6 trying to get somebody to service his septic tank.

7 **COMMISSIONER FLEMING:** Okay. Thank you.

8 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Commissioner
9 Fleming.

10 Any other Commissioner questions for Mr.
11 Jacky?

12 [No response]

13 **EXAMINATION**

14 **BY CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:**

15 **Q** Mr. Jacky, I have just one, right quick. You said that
16 you had some homeowners that were near the lake. Maybe
17 you said and I just didn't hear it. What – I'm just
18 trying to get my arms around where you are. What's the
19 name of your –

20 **A** It's called The Landings.

21 **Q** The Landings.

22 **A** It's off of Beechcreek Road.

23 **Q** The Landings, okay. All right. Well, thank you.
24 That's all I have.

25 **A** Well, just one other – there's four – we actually have

1 five phases. The newer phases don't actually have the
2 LET system, but the four – four of our phases have that
3 LET system.

4 **Q** Four do, and one does –

5 **A** Does not.

6 **Q** – not?

7 **A** And it's actually across the road from our original –

8 **Q** But you're in one of the four?

9 **A** I'm in one of the four.

10 **Q** Okay. And you do have some homes that are out – some
11 that are on the lake and some that are not.

12 **A** That's correct.

13 **Q** Am I understanding that right?

14 **A** That's correct.

15 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** All right. I think
16 that's all I have. If there are no other
17 questions, thank you for your testimony, and you
18 may step down. Thank you Mr. Jacky.

19 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

20 Mr. Dong, next witness.

21 **MR. DONG:** Carl Bartlett?

22 [Witness affirmed]

23 THEREUPON came,

24 **C A R L B A R T L E T T ,**

25 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

1 **MR. RICHARDSON:** Give us your name and
2 address, please.

3 **WITNESS:** Thank you very much for the
4 opportunity to speak to you tonight. My name is
5 Carl Bartlett. I live in the Spring Lake
6 Subdivision in Lexington County, which is right off
7 of Cromer Road.

8 If I live until December, I will have been a
9 customer of Carolina Water Service for 40 years.
10 Since I am testifying under oath, I am bound to
11 tell you that 40 years ago I had a full head of
12 hair.

13 [Laughter]

14 And I'm not going to blame that on Carolina
15 Water. I'm not here tonight to beat up Carolina
16 Water or beat them down. I'm simply here to ask
17 you for the very best judgment that this panel can
18 make.

19 We've heard about the quality of Carolina
20 Water. Forty years ago, the water quality was
21 absolutely horrible. I'm sure you have all the
22 documents before you, and I will not repeat the
23 history of the complaints and the concerns of all
24 the customers of Carolina Water. Finally, it was
25 deemed necessary to shut down the wells that

1 Carolina Water was supplying water to homeowners
2 with. They were unfit. The water system, since it
3 was shut down, Carolina Water was forced to buy
4 water from another source: the City of West
5 Columbia. Now Carolina Water is no longer in the
6 water business; they are in the water distribution
7 business. And the rates that we received were
8 based on rates of the City of West Columbia.

9 My complaints with the water service, the
10 quality of that water service have greatly
11 diminished. There's no real problem. The only
12 problem that exists today is in the infrastructure
13 that remains. There's good water running through
14 bad systems. In the 40 years, I do not feel that
15 Carolina Water has been a good servant of the
16 people and they have not been good stewards of the
17 responsibility and the privilege that has been
18 granted to them.

19 The sewer system, you all know the history on.
20 I'm not going to repeat that. You've already heard
21 that tonight. The simple solution was to get rid
22 of the sewer system. It was passed over, hook or
23 crook, to the Town of Lexington to process the
24 sewage.

25 I have no voice when I talk to the Town of

1 Lexington. None whatsoever. I might as well talk
2 to that wall over there. I'm not a resident of the
3 Town of Lexington. I am simply a cash cow.

4 Immediately, the Town of Lexington instituted a 17
5 percent rate increase. Did I have a voice in it?
6 No. None whatsoever. I do not vote in the Town of
7 Lexington.

8 We had an open district in House District 69,
9 recently. The candidate who won had the full
10 endorsement of the Mayor of the Town of Lexington.
11 He may do all right; I don't think I'm going to
12 fare too well in that deal. My sewer bill went
13 from \$57 a month to \$67 a month. I had no say in
14 it. I had no Public Service Commission to protect
15 me. Matter of fact, I didn't even have a
16 representative in the Statehouse to help me. At
17 one time, we had Bill Riser. Bill Riser is no
18 longer there. Always felt that Bill Riser had my
19 back. I don't know who has my back now.

20 But we've got a system now where Carolina
21 Water is asking for a rate increase. Again, I'm
22 not a forensic accountant. I wish I was. I never
23 played one on TV. If I was a forensic accountant,
24 I'd be examining the books of Carolina
25 Water/Utilities, Inc., to see where the money is.

1 Can they cut back? You've heard some people
2 tonight say they're on fixed income. I'm 65 years
3 old; I've been on fixed income since I was 17 years
4 old. My income was fixed on my performance. Every
5 raise I ever got, I got because I deserved it. I
6 deserved it.

7 Does Carolina Water deserve a rate increase?
8 I don't know, I'm not that forensic accountant. I
9 don't have access to their books. The only contact
10 I have with Carolina Water – and I can tell you
11 horror story after horror story after horror story,
12 just as anybody in this room can tell you about
13 that. Again, they've just not been good stewards.
14 They've not had the responsibility. They've not
15 been good stewards of the privilege that has been
16 granted to them, okay?

17 Now they're asking for a rate increase. I
18 know I can't ask you a question, but has the
19 federal government not just given them a 20 percent
20 rate increase already? Are they not going to get
21 more money?

22 They just lost a cash cow. That's in the
23 sewer business. That was free money. They're
24 going to make up for it some way. All of a sudden,
25 we get a rate increase. Can you imagine me going

1 to my boss when I worked, before I retired, and
2 saying, "Hey, I want to buy a new car, I deserve a
3 new raise. Okay?"

4 The only thing I will ask you tonight to do –
5 and I ask everybody to do – is make absolutely
6 certain, absolutely certain, that Carolina
7 Water/Utilities, Inc., are going to be good
8 stewards of the rate increase that they are asking
9 for.

10 I thank you.

11 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Well, thank you, Mr.
12 Bartlett. Does that conclude your testimony?

13 **WITNESS:** Yes, it does, sir.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** All right. If you'll
15 bear with us just a second.

16 Mr. Elliott, questions for this witness?

17 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions of Mr. Bartlett,
18 but I did not get his street address. May I have
19 that?

20 **WITNESS:** My street address is 117 Point South
21 Lane, Lexington, South Carolina 29073.

22 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Thank you, sir.

23 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. That it?

24 Ms. Valtorta, questions for Mr. Bartlett.

25 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

1 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, Office of
2 Regulatory Staff.

3 **MR. NELSON:** I can't think of anything. Thank
4 you for coming out, Mr. Bartlett.

5 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners.
6 Commissioner Howard.

7 **EXAMINATION**

8 **BY COMMISSIONER HOWARD:**

9 **Q** Good evening, Mr. Bartlett.

10 **A** Good evening, sir.

11 **Q** Let's talk a little bit about infrastructure, or –

12 **A** Yes, sir.

13 **Q** – more infrastructure.

14 **A** Yes, sir.

15 **Q** You said it was 40 years old, that you know of.

16 **A** Yes, sir.

17 **Q** What composition are the pipes? Are the pipes iron?
18 Steel? Do you know the composition?

19 **A** I think it's probably a multitude of those, because it's
20 kind of fix-as-needed. You heard a couple of people
21 speak tonight about water being turned off. For
22 example, yesterday morning, I noticed that the water
23 pressure in my neighborhood was low – a little lower
24 than normal. I'm very blessed; I live in a great
25 country. I can go and turn on a light switch. I can go

1 turn on a faucet and I'm going to get water out of it.
2 So if it's running a little slow, I'm not really
3 concerned about it, other than why is it running slow.
4 I had a couple of neighbors to call me and ask that
5 question, "Hey, is your water pressure low?" And
6 immediately, I'm turning on the faucets. Yes, it's a
7 little bit low. Okay? So we finally determine, after a
8 great e-mail chain, after about seven hours yesterday,
9 that we all had low water pressure in Spring Lake. And
10 then last night after I'm eating dinner – or just before
11 dinner, I get a robo-call from Carolina Water Service,
12 telling me that I could probably experience low water
13 pressure. And I appreciated hearing that seven hours
14 after it started. And, as usual – no offense; I
15 understand how these things work – they're working on
16 it, and we should be under a boil-water advisory because
17 of such, and that we would receive a call when that
18 boil-water advisory had been lifted.

19 Now, I can only speak for myself, but I can pretty
20 much tell you that not every single customer that I know
21 of, based on personal experience in talking with my
22 neighbors, get those calls. I got it. I don't know if
23 they call and then if you don't answer the call, if the
24 call just goes away or what they do, but I have had
25 several customers – excuse me – neighbors tell me they

1 didn't get a call. So we do a little e-mail chain
2 there.

3 As of this afternoon, I have full water pressure.
4 Full water pressure. But I've received no call telling
5 me not to boil water.

6 So to answer your question, the infrastructure
7 breaks down. New equipment will break down, okay? So
8 it's in a state of repair, but I don't think it's a
9 planned state of repair. And I certainly don't want to
10 pay for every pipe that Carolina Water ever laid to be
11 replaced. I think there should've been a plan in place
12 a long time ago to start repairing and replacing a
13 little before you need it. Kind of like the roads in
14 South Carolina. We're already in a debacle now with
15 V.C. Summer Nuclear Plant, okay? I don't want Carolina
16 Water to turn into another V.C. Summer Nuclear Plant
17 deal, and where sometime I may get \$12 back, okay? I
18 just want them to get the money they deserve. They
19 deserve. I hope that answered your question, sir.

20 **Q** Yeah, but generally, when you have a broken pipe, a
21 boil-water advisory will follow. Do you have a lot of
22 boil-water advisories? Say, in a typical year, how many
23 boil-water advisories would you have? How many broken
24 pipes would you have?

25 **A** I'm a little hesitant here, because I'm having to

1 testify under oath, and I don't want somebody to come
2 back and look up some statistic.

3 **Q** Well, let me –

4 **A** But I'm going to –

5 **Q** – rephrase it. Generally speaking, give –

6 **A** I'm going to –

7 **Q** – me an estimate.

8 **A** I'm going to generally say probably around three, maybe
9 four, a year. And that's – sometimes maybe two,
10 sometimes maybe four. I haven't kept a real record of
11 them, okay? I don't drink a lot of water. I don't
12 waste a lot of water. All I want to do is wash my
13 clothes, water my lawn a little bit, and take a bath on
14 Saturday night. I don't think that's asking too much.
15 I want to be able to afford to do all of those things,
16 okay? So –

17 **Q** I thank you very much. Thank you for your answers.

18 **A** Thank you, sir.

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, any
20 further questions for Mr. Bartlett? Commissioner
21 Fleming.

22 **EXAMINATION**

23 **BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:**

24 **Q** I just wanted to clarify. Your sewer service now is
25 with Lexington, right? You pay –

1 **A** Excuse me, ma'am, that is with the Town of Lexington.

2 **Q** Okay.

3 **A** Let's make that very clear: the Town of Lexington.

4 **Q** Okay. And that's who you pay your sewer bill to.

5 **A** Yes, ma'am. And matter of fact, I received an
6 application, such as everybody who dealt with that
7 particular situation, indicating that not only with
8 everything else, I had to give them my Social Security
9 Number, in case I did not pay my sewer bill, so they
10 could deduct it from my State tax refund. And I will
11 state, for the record, I never once and have no
12 intentions of giving the Town of Lexington my Social
13 Security Number. And, yet, I found that I've received a
14 bill and my sewer system has not been cut off.

15 Now with that in mind, I'll tell you something that
16 happened to a neighbor of mine who travels quite a bit.
17 Was going to be gone for three months. Decided it would
18 probably be wise to have the water turned off. Okay?
19 You know something you can't do? You can't turn the
20 sewer off. She called the Town of Lexington, okay? She
21 can cut off Carolina Water; they'll be glad to come out
22 and do a little turn thing in your front yard, and then
23 come back in three months and charge you whatever it is
24 they charge to turn it back so that you can get water
25 flow through the system. Carolina Water is going to get

1 billed for whatever goes through the system. But the
2 Town of Lexington just does not know how to turn off
3 your sewer. Now I heard somebody say they put a plug in
4 it. I said I can tell you right now, if they come in my
5 neighborhood to put in a plug, they're going to have a
6 real big problem, okay?

7 You know, whether I flush my toilet one time or I
8 flush it 478 times, I'm still going to pay \$67 a month.
9 So here I am, just an old man, retired, living with my
10 lovely bride of 45 years, flush the toilet a couple
11 times a day. I'm paying the same rate as somebody with
12 four kids, throwing toys down the toilet and flushing
13 it, okay? They can't cut off their sewer, can't cut off
14 mine.

15 So, again, I just don't know what to do with the
16 sewer system. And you know my biggest fear? My biggest
17 fear is that same Town of Lexington, before too awfully
18 long, is going to have complete control of my water.
19 And then I'll invite you to come by my neighborhood, let
20 you look at the brown grass, because I sure won't be
21 watering it anymore. Okay? And I wouldn't get too
22 close to me, because I might not be able to take that
23 bath on a Saturday night, okay? But I'll be smiling at
24 you when you come down the road.

25 [Laughter]

1 **Q** Thank you.

2 **A** Thank you, ma'am.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Commissioner
4 Fleming.

5 Any other Commissioner questions for this
6 witness?

7 [No response]

8 Well, if not, Mr. Bartlett, thank you for
9 your testimony and thank you for your
10 participation, and you may step down, sir.

11 **WITNESS:** Thank you, very much.

12 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, sir.

13 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

14 Next witness, Mr. Dong.

15 **MR. DONG:** Rosamond Taube?

16 [Witness affirmed]

17 THEREUPON came,

18 **R O S A M O N D T A U B E ,**

19 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

20 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address
21 for us.

22 **WITNESS:** Hi. My name is Rosamond Taube. I
23 live in the Ricefield Subdivision on Highway 6.
24 And it's 4 Hickory Hall Court, Irmo, South
25 Carolina. We are in Richland County, and we have

1 water with City of Columbia and sewer with Carolina
2 Water Service.

3 Okay. We're concerned about the increase that
4 has happened over the couple of years of living in
5 that subdivision. So our monthly bill for sewer is
6 currently \$58, okay? And in 2015, it was \$30,
7 which is \$360 annually. If we add the annual
8 inflation rate for the last couple of years, our
9 monthly bill should be \$31.98, which ends up being
10 \$383.76 and. If we had a 10 percent increase every
11 year for the last couple of years, our bill would
12 be \$43.92 monthly, which is \$529.04 annually. But
13 if we had a 20 percent increase, which is what we
14 actually have, then our bill would be \$58.20
15 monthly, with \$711.60 annually. Right now, it's at
16 \$58, which means it's almost been 20 percent
17 increases.

18 So why is a 20 percent increase acceptable –
19 that's the question – when inflation has been
20 either 2.1 or less percent since 2015? I just
21 checked that on the net.

22 And there are new subdivisions nearby our
23 subdivision that have recently been built, and I
24 don't feel that we need to subsidize any of their
25 sewage infrastructure or, you know, their bills.

1 So, that's it. It's just the increase that
2 has been more than 20 percent annually.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Taube. Am
4 I saying that correctly?

5 **WITNESS:** Yes.

6 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Elliott, questions
7 for Ms. Taube?

8 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Ms. Taube.
9 Thank you for coming.

10 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
11 for this witness?

12 **MS. VALTORTA:** I don't have any questions.

13 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, Office of
14 Regulatory Staff.

15 **MR. NELSON:** I can't think of anything, but
16 thank you for coming out. Appreciate it.

17 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, questions
18 for Ms. Taube?

19 [No response]

20 Well, hearing none, thank you for your
21 testimony, Ms. Taube, and thank you for your
22 participation. You may step down.

23 **WITNESS:** Thank you all.

24 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

25 **MR. DONG:** Alberta Coit?

[Witness affirmed]

THEREUPON came,

A L B E R T A C O I T ,

who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

MR. RICHARDSON: Please state your name and address.

WITNESS: My name is Alberta Coit. I live at 500 Briercliff Drive, Columbia, South Carolina 29203.

I've lived in Washington Heights since 1981. The history of me and the water company has not been a good one. I've been here three times, I believe. But I only have four problems that I want to present, with this increase that they're asking for.

The first problem is the improvements that they said were done two and a half years, that they've done over the last two and a half years, have not really benefited my community. This \$11 million that they said they spent must have improved other communities because it hasn't improved mine.

This money that this company should've invested over 30 years or better, to provide us with decent quality drinking water, this is part of

1 the cost to me of doing – or being in the business
2 of providing water. Seeking to recover investments
3 from your infrastructure is not always guaranteed.
4 I'm not against companies making profits, but
5 increasing our rates with this company, to me, is
6 like robbery, because of our past history.

7 The second problem I have is water for this
8 company comes from a private – for our community –
9 comes from a private well source. I'm not
10 understanding what "costs of purchased water" means
11 for this company. Are they purchasing water from
12 the City of Columbia? Why purchase water from
13 them? Just sell them the water company. Also,
14 exactly how does this – supposedly they did an
15 interconnect back in July of 2017. Now just – in
16 2017. I'm not really sure how that worked. I know
17 what "interconnect" means, and I'm just trying to
18 figure out, does this mean that we are now getting
19 City of Columbia water, not private well water
20 anymore? Or is it a combination of the two
21 systems? And CWS is just like a middle system or
22 middleman that collects the money?

23 The other problem I have is the other reasons
24 listed in their letter for increasing rates are
25 things that this company should have been doing all

1 along. DHEC Rules and Regulations? That's not
2 new. Improve operating performances? That's not
3 new. The facilities? That's a continuous process.
4 So, neither one of these is new.

5 So the fourth problem I have is it appears
6 that this company cannot afford to provide us with
7 quality water, so maybe they should just sell it to
8 the City of Columbia. And so I'm asking that you
9 do not allow this company to get these increases,
10 because I'm thinking they should be reimbursing us
11 for all the 30-plus years of bad quality water that
12 they've been providing for us, but, yet, when they
13 finally do something that supposedly halfway is
14 right, to give us some halfway decent water, they
15 want us to pay for it? That, to me, don't seem
16 right. They should at least – when are they going
17 to take responsibility for some of the cost? We
18 have to pay anyway, because if you don't pay your
19 water bill, they're going to cut it off. We have
20 no choice in the matter.

21 So I'm just asking that you do not, do not,
22 please do not allow them an increase. That's all.

23 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Coit.
24 Does that conclude your testimony?

25 **WITNESS:** That does.

1 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Elliott, questions
2 for Ms. Coit?

3 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions, Ms. Coit. Thank
4 you for coming out.

5 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
6 for Ms. Coit?

7 **MS. VALTORTA:** Yeah, one question.

8 **CROSS EXAMINATION**

9 **BY MS. VALTORTA:**

10 **Q** You say you have an interconnection for your water now?

11 **A** Yeah, they did that back in July of 2017, I believe.

12 **Q** Has the quality of your water improved?

13 **A** It has, slightly. I've had one issue where my water
14 looked like tea. I didn't bring it with me. That was
15 in November, I think, of – no, I think the interconnect
16 was actually done in July 2016, and then I had one
17 instance where the water still looked like tea. But for
18 the most part, it has improved but I still don't trust
19 it because I don't drink it, I don't cook with it, I
20 don't do anything but do my laundry, take my baths, but
21 – I wish I didn't have to do that with it, because I'm
22 still not trusting it. I occasionally have problems
23 with the pressure, but it's not as bad as it was before
24 they did the interconnect. And supposedly we also have,
25 now, working fire hydrants, but they're still – they're

1 still not – I thought working fire hydrants were
2 supposed to be painted red. Ours are still painted – I
3 think they're either black or some other color. But the
4 company says we have working fire hydrants now, but I
5 don't know if that's so.

6 **Q** Where is your water coming from?

7 **A** I don't know. That's my question. I wrote the company,
8 but I never really know where it's coming from. I
9 assume we're still – I don't know where it's coming
10 from. That's my question.

11 **MS. VALTORTA:** Thank you.

12 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Valtorta.

13 Mr. Nelson, Office of Regulatory Staff.

14 **MR. NELSON:** I don't have any questions, but,
15 ma'am, you can – you've got a lot of people from
16 the company I think you can corral and talk to
17 tonight, since they won't answer your telephone
18 calls, or whatever.

19 **WITNESS:** Well, I wrote letters to them, and
20 nobody answered my letters.

21 **MR. NELSON:** You're not getting any response.
22 So you've got them, and also you've got us, too,
23 here tonight. If you'd rather come talk to us,
24 we'd be happy to talk to you and tell you what we
25 know, okay? Thank you for coming out, too.

1 Appreciate it.

2 **WITNESS:** Thank you.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, any
4 questions for Ms. Coit? For this witness? Well,
5 hearing none, Ms. Coit, I do have a couple for you,
6 myself.

7 **EXAMINATION**

8 **BY CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:**

9 **Q** Yes, I do think I've seen you before.

10 **A** Yes, you have.

11 **Q** And I think we had a public hearing and I believe you
12 even had Rep. McEachern over here –

13 **A** We did.

14 **Q** – with one of the public hearings and had him speak, and
15 I do recall the fire hydrant issues, and I do recall
16 some of the other many issues that your area in
17 Washington Heights was experiencing. Let me ask you a
18 few questions related to that. You said you've noticed
19 a slight improvement since then, and since this time.

20 **A** Uh-huh.

21 **Q** And I think your improvement you mentioned was just in
22 the pressure. Was your water quality – has your water
23 quality also improved, or just the pressure?

24 **A** Well, the pressure has improved, and I think the quality
25 may have, because I actually collected some water that

1 looked like tea, and this was on – I meant to bring it
2 with me, but I forgot. I think it was like November 20,
3 2016, and it looked like tea again. But, normally, it
4 would've been even more than just once. So I haven't
5 had that issue as often. So it's just been once, since
6 the supposed interconnect happened.

7 **Q** And your pressure has –

8 **A** The pressure's on occasion it may be low, but not as
9 much as it used to.

10 **Q** So it is some better.

11 **A** It has improved with the pressure, yes.

12 **Q** Also, we weren't privy to it, but I believe Rep.
13 McEachern and several in the subdivision were going to
14 have a meeting about the hydrants and that was going to
15 improve, too. What you're saying now is, best of your
16 knowledge, not all the hydrants are working. Do you
17 think –

18 **A** I don't think so.

19 **Q** How many do you think are working versus how many do you
20 think are not? Because I know fire protection was a
21 concern –

22 **A** Yeah, it still is.

23 **Q** – that came up last time.

24 **A** Yes. Now, we live off of Hardscrabble Road. I know
25 Hardscrabble has one or two at the entrance into our

1 neighborhood, and I know we have two in our
2 neighborhood. And they have not been painted red, so I
3 don't know if they're working or not. They're either
4 black or they have this kind of a tannish-looking color.
5 So I'm not really sure if they're working or not.

6 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Well, thank you. I don't
7 have any further questions, and I don't think any
8 Commissioners do, either, but I would certainly
9 encourage you to do what Mr. Nelson just offered.
10 His people, South Carolina Office of Regulatory
11 Staff, is here, and the company is here. And as
12 Mr. Nelson mentioned, I think between these two
13 groups they can answer your questions, and I would
14 encourage you to rely on him or the company or both
15 to maybe get some of your questions answered.
16 Thank you for your testimony.

17 **WITNESS:** Thank you.

18 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

19 **MR. DONG:** James Bell.

20 [Witness affirmed]

21 THEREUPON came,

22 **J A M E S A . B E L L ,**

23 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

24 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address
25 for us, please.

1 **WITNESS:** My name is James Bell. I actually
2 have two addresses. I have two homes. One is in
3 the Spring Lake Subdivision: 109 Point South Court.
4 The other is in a different area of town where I'm
5 under a different water company. I was also in the
6 I-20 group that was changed over to Town of
7 Lexington, for sewage.

8 But the Carolina Water Service base rate, for
9 no water usage at all, for 2017, was approximately
10 \$73 a month. They have, according to records,
11 28,000 customers in South Carolina, which gives
12 them an annual income of approximately \$25 million
13 a year. Over the years, that's a lot of money
14 they've taken in. I've owned this house in Spring
15 Lake Subdivision for over 20 years and had their
16 service the entire time. A properly run company,
17 with this many years of this net income, should
18 have ample funding for even larger investment in
19 its systems.

20 As I said, I have two homes. My other home
21 has Columbia Water, City of Columbia water. My
22 base rate with the City of Columbia is \$33.50.
23 With the new Town of Lexington, my sewer flat rate
24 is \$67.67, and that's a \$10 increase – or a 17
25 percent increase, as was pointed out earlier – over

1 what Carolina Water Service's previous sewer rate
2 was, at \$57. Just the sewage, alone, is double the
3 minimum bill of the City of Columbia.

4 There's also the inconvenience of secondary
5 billing being passed on. This other gentleman from
6 Spring Lake mentioned that they can't shut your
7 sewer off? Well, they can. If you don't pay the
8 bill, they will come and dig up your yard, install
9 the plug, and in order to get your sewage turned
10 back on, you must reimburse the Town of Lexington
11 for the labor fees for doing that. So all of these
12 customers will incur this expense, as well, if they
13 can't make this transition smoothly.

14 Carolina Water Service rates are far in excess
15 of normal rates charged by other water service
16 companies and any rate increase, in my opinion,
17 would be ludicrous.

18 Their name is also a misnomer. Carolina Water
19 Service has nothing to do with Carolina. As most
20 people know, you send your payments to Utilities
21 ,Inc. Utilities, Inc., handles utilities for 15
22 states, and Carolina Water Service is wholly owned
23 by them and then, in turn, Utilities, Inc., is
24 owned by Corix Utilities. They are based in
25 Wausatosa, Wisconsin, and Northbrook, Illinois.

1 And, in turn, Corix Utilities is owned by – what is
2 this – British Columbia Investment Management
3 Corporation, with head offices in Vancouver,
4 British Columbia. So everyone gets a slice of this
5 pie. It's just a conglomerate that is tapping a
6 cash cow. They're taking in \$25 million minimum,
7 per year, and they're asking for a rate increase to
8 put in \$11 million over the course of two and a
9 half years back into a system that they've been
10 tapping this money out of for decades, without
11 putting that money back in.

12 Their inability to manage the company has been
13 repeatedly demonstrated by undrinkable water, the
14 sewage discharges, repeated environmental impacts,
15 some resulting in EPA fines. They've just become a
16 middleman for the customers between them and the
17 City of Columbia, City of West Columbia, Town of
18 Lexington, and I assume others. We need to
19 eliminate the middleman.

20 I would like to formally request the Public
21 Service Commission not only deny this increase but
22 evict Carolina Water Service from the State of
23 South Carolina. Turn these accounts over to the
24 local water service suppliers. Stop forcing South
25 Carolina citizens to pay for the mismanagement of

1 this company. At the very least, there should be
2 regulations put in place to prevent a utility
3 company from subcontracting services and charging
4 the customers more so to do that than the customers
5 would pay if they had those services from the
6 company that they're subcontracting to.

7 And by the way, I didn't get a call about the
8 boil-water.

9 That sums up what I had to say. Please don't
10 offer an increase to a company that cannot perform
11 the task of running a water company. Turn it over
12 to someone who can.

13 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Bell, for
14 your testimony.

15 Mr. Elliott, questions for this witness?

16 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Mr. Bell.
17 Thank you for coming.

18 **WITNESS:** Thank you.

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
20 for this witness?

21 **MS. VALTORTA:** I don't have any questions.

22 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson.

23 **MR. NELSON:** I don't have any questions, but
24 thank you, Mr. Bell. You obviously put a lot of
25 time and thought in developing everything you said

1 tonight, and I appreciate your comments.

2 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, questions
3 for Mr. Bell?

4 [No response]

5 Well, hearing none, Mr. Bell, thank you for
6 your testimony and for your participation tonight.

7 **WITNESS:** Thank you for your service.

8 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

9 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

10 Next witness, Mr. Dong?

11 **MR. DONG:** Joel Neely?

12 [Witness affirmed]

13 THEREUPON came,

14 **J O E L N E E L Y ,**

15 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

16 **MR. RICHARDSON:** Please state your full name
17 and address.

18 **WITNESS:** My name is Joel Neely. I live at
19 206 Shadowfield Drive, in West Columbia. We have
20 Carolina Water. My father's originally the one
21 that built – I mean, bought a house from the
22 original builder. Basically, he quit drinking that
23 water. He's no longer with us anymore.

24 He told me a story about a cistern. I'm not
25 even sure what a cistern is, other than he said

1 there was a lot of bird poop in it. So, you know,
2 that was back before bottled water. He just quit
3 drinking it. He would go to Healing Springs. He'd
4 drive all the way there with milk jugs just to
5 bring water home, so he'd have something to drink.
6 That was one of the things.

7 He also told me that the pipes couldn't pump
8 for fires, that they would collapse if the fire
9 trucks hooked into them. Now he was told this, I
10 believe, by the builder. And let's see how this
11 worked [indicating] – we've had two fires in our
12 neighborhood this year. In one of them there was a
13 death in the fire. The other one, I saw the
14 pressure – because it was right down the street a
15 little ways, across the street. When the fire
16 trucks got there, it looked like my little firehose
17 – my little hose at the house. That's about all
18 the water pressure they had, and they didn't even
19 fight it. The whole house went up. Eventually,
20 they were able to put it out when it looked like it
21 was going to catch the house next-door on fire.

22 That's just one of my concerns. Just like the
23 other lady was talking about, there's no – we're
24 kind of at their mercy here, without any water
25 pressure. If you were to turn up the water

1 pressure, I believe all the pipes would just
2 collapse – not collapse, but would burst. The
3 lady's next-door burst in the middle of the night,
4 around 1 o'clock in the morning. I'm scrambling to
5 try to stop the water from rushing into my garage.
6 I had to put a big I-beam in front of the door and
7 I had to put sandbags in front of it to keep it
8 out, and – but we never heard anything from them
9 about that. They fixed the next-door neighbor's
10 yard, and I noticed the exposed pipes, when they
11 were sticking up out of the ground, they seemed to
12 be lined with something. They were PVC pipes, they
13 were white, but the inside of it wasn't white; it
14 was a pinkish color. And I'm not sure what that
15 is. We've been drinking this water for – he was
16 one of the original people that moved in. At the
17 beginning, we were one of the first people in this
18 neighborhood.

19 And another thing – I mean, this – you want to
20 give them a raise for substandard equipment? That
21 doesn't make sense. They're already getting
22 extreme prices now, and it's all for substandard
23 and it's been that way. And all the realtors know
24 that here. I used to be a realtor for Tom Jenkins
25 Realty, and it's in all the MLS books that, you

1 know, if you're smart enough, that you'll go
2 somewhere else. And that's one of the things that
3 runs people away from the neighborhood, is the
4 prices. It can rival your electric bill sometimes,
5 just for water and sewer.

6 Other than that, that's about it for me. I
7 just wanted to – I heard everybody else hit on the
8 subjects that I was concerned about. That's about
9 the same thing. Nobody drinks the water. The
10 pipes have been contaminated in the past.

11 I remember taking a trip on a raft one time
12 down the Saluda River and seeing this water flowing
13 over the banks of the sewage treatment plant. I'm
14 a hazmat driver. I was told by one of our sewage
15 treatment plants in this State that it's against
16 federal law to discharge sewer into our rivers. So
17 they've been getting away with it for a long time,
18 because I was in my early 20s when I saw this. I
19 don't understand how they've been getting away with
20 it all this time, but they have.

21 And the fact that we have to pay for this
22 conversion over to the sewer, that just seems like
23 we're being discriminated against. It's not our
24 fault. We didn't do any of this, and I don't think
25 we should have to pay any fine that they've been

1 fined, because that's their business, not our
2 business. If I get a fine, I pay my fine. I don't
3 pass it on to somebody else. That just doesn't
4 seem like good business to me. And that's about
5 it.

6 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Neely.

7 Mr. Elliott, questions for Mr. Neely?

8 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Mr. Neely.

9 Thank you.

10 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
11 for this witness?

12 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

13 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, Office of
14 Regulatory Staff.

15 **CROSS EXAMINATION**

16 **BY MR. NELSON:**

17 **Q** I've got a few questions for you, Mr. Neely. You were
18 talking about the water and all, and I know you said
19 your dad didn't drink it. Do you drink this water, at
20 all?

21 **A** I'll drink it because I know they've hooked up to West
22 Columbia. I still run it through another filter. I
23 have a water machine that comes from Japan that's able
24 to filter off everything. It doesn't matter what's in
25 it. But I'm very concerned about that pink lining

1 inside of the pipes. I don't know what that is.

2 **Q** Could you explain that to me again, because I was kind
3 of –

4 **A** I don't know what it is either.

5 **Q** So you're talking about when they put new pipe in?

6 **A** I saw the present pipe, the one that's in the ground,
7 and I looked at it and it's pink. I don't know why it
8 would be pink. I don't know what it –

9 **Q** Are you talking about the line that's coming like from
10 the main line into your house, or is this a line –

11 **A** No, this is a big line, the main line outside that runs
12 down to the front yards. And they just burst up out of
13 the ground, and they came in and fixed it and then they
14 re-laid sod over our whole yard – her yard, not ours.
15 But we had a creek that run right down our driveway and
16 it was coming right at the garage, and I was able to
17 divert it down between the two houses. But that's when
18 I noticed that – when they came back to fix it, that's
19 when I noticed it was pink inside.

20 And I was – my father had told me about the bird
21 poop contamination, and that's why he didn't drink the
22 water anymore.

23 **Q** I want to go to the fire hydrant thing for a second,
24 too. You've got fire hydrants in your neighborhood,
25 then, I guess, from what you're talking about?

1 **A** There's one at the house next-door. Not the one that
2 had the pipe burst, but on the other side he's got one
3 in his yard.

4 **Q** Is it red colored?

5 **A** I don't believe it's colored red, either. I think it's
6 like a tan color maybe. I'm not real sure what color it
7 is.

8 **Q** Has anybody ever told you whether or not those hydrants
9 are supposed to be able to be used by the fire
10 department?

11 **A** I believe they did hook up to it, because they finally
12 had to use the water to put that fire completely out,
13 because the house next-door almost caught on fire.

14 **Q** When you say they hooked it up, there wasn't a lot of
15 pressure on the line?

16 **A** No, it was just kind of like just trickling out.

17 **Q** Sewer, now. So, you're under that transfer of the I-20
18 system; you're served by the Town of Lexington now? Is
19 that right?

20 **A** Yes, uh-huh.

21 **MR. NELSON:** I've got no further questions.

22 Thank you for coming out, sir. Appreciate it.

23 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

24 Commissioners, questions for this witness?

25 [No response]

1 I've got one quick one for you here, Mr.
2 Neely.

3 **EXAMINATION**

4 **BY CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:**

5 **Q** Mr. Nelson – kind of going where Mr. Nelson went with
6 you, Mr. Nelson, at the beginning of the hearing
7 tonight, announced an 800 number for their office, for
8 the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff, and, of
9 course, you have the company officials here tonight.
10 But prior to just telling Mr. Nelson what you just told
11 him in your answers, did you happen to call either the
12 company or the State to report the troubling issues you
13 saw with the pressure from the fire hydrants or any of
14 the other problems that you described? Have you ever
15 reported that to the company or to the South Carolina
16 Office of Regulatory Staff?

17 **A** You would think the fire department would. But, I mean,
18 I didn't do it.

19 **Q** But you haven't.

20 **A** No.

21 **Q** But you told some of that to Mr. Nelson, so – and also
22 he has given out their 800 number tonight. So I would
23 certainly encourage you to talk with the company
24 officials and the Office of Regulatory Staff after the
25 hearing. And thank you for your testimony.

1 **A** [Nodding head.]

2 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

3 **MR. DONG:** Joyce Fleming?

4 [Witness affirmed]

5 THEREUPON came,

6 **J O Y C E F L E M I N G ,**

7 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

8 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address
9 for us.

10 **WITNESS:** My name is Joyce Fleming. I live at
11 118 May Morning Drive, in the Spring Lake
12 Subdevelopment near Oak Grove.

13 And I had my notes I wanted to follow, but
14 things have just been swirling since I've been
15 hearing all these things I wanted to let you know.

16 Yesterday I did experience low pressure. I
17 called my husband and said, you know, why – I don't
18 know what he was going to tell me, but, it was
19 fluctuating. It was low and then it was okay, and
20 I waited, and it was low, it was okay. And like
21 Mr. Carl said, it was probably about seven hours.
22 I got no call about the issue. I have never gotten
23 calls about the water breaks or water issues.

24 The way that I found out about boil-water
25 advisories is when the water is not working, we

1 call in, they tell us. I say, "How long?" They
2 don't know. Then I ask, "When will you tell us
3 when we don't have to boil the water anymore?" And
4 they typically say, "Call us back and just keep
5 checking."

6 So now I'm a little bit horrified that I – I
7 do drink the water, only in coffee. I wash dishes.
8 I fed my dogs the water. And I'm thinking, I don't
9 know – and there have been other times when I
10 haven't been informed. I guess I need to get on
11 the e-mail system with Mr. Carl there. But I just,
12 you know, wanted to let you know that.

13 But I have been complaining about Carolina
14 Water since I have lived at my current address for
15 36 years. I've complained to neighbors and friends
16 and family and now I guess it's time to complain to
17 somebody that makes a difference – as my husband
18 told me, "You need to go and get this off your
19 chest."

20 I'm afraid I'm going to repeat a lot, but,
21 anyway, I know that Carolina Water Service – or I
22 suppose they filed a request with the Public
23 Service Commission for a rate increase and they've
24 given you financial documents in support of that
25 request. I hope you'll consider more than just

1 those numbers and you'll think about what these
2 customers are saying and what we've had to go
3 through. I just wonder if the rate increase is
4 similar to a well-known large utility company in
5 the news that has burdened its customers recently
6 with increases to pay off its mistakes.

7 The mistakes that I'm speaking of with
8 Carolina Water, we've heard the years of the
9 environmental violations in connection with that
10 management of their wastewater and the dangerous,
11 damaging discharges into Saluda River. And as
12 someone said, they're being forced to pay that
13 fine, the \$1.5 million.

14 Now, this takeover of the sewer system by the
15 Town of Lexington is going to be paid for by the
16 customers in this Oak Grove area, and from what I
17 read there are about 2000 customers in that I-20
18 area. And that results in an increase in our
19 monthly sewer bill because of the ineptness of CWS.
20 And now they want to create another increase in our
21 utility bill by raising rates on the water. This
22 is coming from a company that we've heard about all
23 night tonight, with poor reviews, poor ratings by
24 the customers, customer service complaints, poor
25 quality.

1 Now, the quality, for me, the poor quality
2 started 36 years ago when the water that was
3 sourced at the time from the well was brown with
4 sediment, and it looked to me like there was lake
5 water in the bathtub. When it settled, you could
6 kind of see the clearer water on top, but it was
7 completely brown sediment on the bottom. We were
8 delivered to our doorstep, if we called them, we
9 got tablets of Red-B-Gone. We had to put those in
10 our washing machine if we didn't want tinted orange
11 clothing. I wonder what that did to our pipes or,
12 you know, our systems back then. But that was when
13 I stopped or I never drank the water. I've been
14 drinking bottled water forever, because after they
15 hooked up with West Columbia, I still couldn't
16 drink it. There was such heavy chlorination, I
17 would put the water in a cup of ice, go to work,
18 and right as I got there I would down it, and get
19 immediately sick. I could not – it took me days to
20 figure it out, but it was every day that I was
21 drinking that overly chlorinated water. Of course,
22 I called Carolina Water and they said it was within
23 limits, and I guess it just, you know, was
24 something that I'm sensitive to.

25 Recently, I do notice – and I just pour it

1 out. I notice, when I do dishes in the dishwasher,
2 if a cup is turned up – you know, it inverts – and
3 then I've noticed that the water that collects in
4 it is a little discolored and there's some
5 granules, you know, the sediment and stuff, a
6 little bit in there, the minerals I guess are in
7 there. I just pour it out and just try not to
8 think about it.

9 Also, the rates have been so high. I remember
10 in the '80s when I was taking care of my mother's
11 bills in West Columbia, she was getting water bills
12 of like \$20 and I was well into the hundreds at
13 that point. We would take our cars over to her
14 house to wash them. Now, I hesitate to water the
15 lawn, to wash the cars. If there's a break or if
16 there's something or somebody leaves the water on,
17 it just – it panics me, because I know how
18 expensive the water is.

19 If you look on their website, I – and today,
20 I've spoken with people at DHEC today and the
21 Public Service Commission, and I asked them if the
22 sewer – when I looked up about the sewer system and
23 Carolina Water was forced to put cameras down in
24 that sewer system, they saw the holes, the leaks,
25 they saw some of the pipes were made out of clay

1 and different things, I called and said, "If the
2 sewer system pipes were that bad, what do we know
3 about our water pipes?" And the only thing they
4 could tell us was, "The water is tested." That's
5 all they could say, is that they're given monthly
6 tests by DHEC, and, "We hope the quality is, you
7 know, it's passing, so we're assuming the pipes are
8 okay." That was all that they could tell me.

9 But on their website it's just amazing. I
10 just – I was amazed and confounded. These are the
11 words to express themselves, the company: Superior
12 quality. Efficient operations. Exceptional
13 service and integrity.

14 It goes on to state that they have been able
15 to show, quote, "We are a reliable, privately owned
16 provider of your water and wastewater utilities,"
17 end quote. Under a section titled "Environmental
18 Stewardship," it states, quote, "Carolina Water
19 Service has placed the health of our environment at
20 the forefront of our operations," end quote. I
21 don't think that applied to the Saluda River. It
22 goes on and on. There's so much more, it just was
23 amazing.

24 In my opinion – I mean, I've told people, I
25 love my community, its location is great for

1 shopping, but do not move there because of the
2 water cost. I would not move into an area again
3 that had Carolina Water. And, you know, in my
4 opinion, this company does not deserve a rate
5 increase. As Dr. Phil says, you do not reward bad
6 behavior.

7 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Fleming.
8 Mr. Elliott, questions for this witness?

9 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Ms. Fleming.
10 Thanks for coming.

11 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
12 for Ms. Fleming?

13 **MS. VALTORTA:** I don't have any questions.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson.

15 **MR. NELSON:** I don't have any questions, but
16 thank you. I'm glad you finally came out and
17 decided to speak.

18 **WITNESS:** My mouth is dry.

19 **MR. NELSON:** You did an excellent job. You
20 have a glass of water right there in front of you.

21 **WITNESS:** Well, I should've done that during
22 [indicating]. I thought my mouth wasn't going to
23 work.

24 [Laughter]

25 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Commissioners, questions

1 for Ms. Fleming? Any questions from Commissioners
2 for Ms. Fleming?

3 [No response]

4 **WITNESS:** Can't tell you how nervous I was.

5 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Well, Ms. Fleming, thank
6 you for your testimony and your participation
7 tonight. And you may take your cup of water and
8 step down.

9 **WITNESS:** Thank you.

10 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

11 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** At this time, we do have
12 some more witnesses that have signed up to speak,
13 but we're going to give our court reporter a brief
14 break just for a few minutes and go into recess,
15 and we'll come back in just a few minutes and hear
16 from the remaining witnesses. Thank you.

17 [WHEREUPON, a recess was taken from 7:44
18 to 7:53 p.m.]

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** If I could ask everyone
20 to return to their seats, and Mr. Dong will call
21 our next witness.

22 **MR. DONG:** Marie Atkinson?

23 [Witness affirmed]

24 THEREUPON came,

25 **M A R I E A T K I N S O N ,**

1 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

2 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address
3 for us.

4 **WITNESS:** My name is Marie Atkinson.

5 I came here for two things to talk about. I
6 live alone by myself. I'm talking about the water
7 system and the sewage. I got my bill. It's \$81 a
8 month. The water, every time the bill come to me
9 in wintertime, it's \$34. In the summer, it's same
10 thing, \$74. In the summertime, I mean, it's \$34.
11 I'm Spanish, so I'm explaining myself the best way
12 I can. So every time the summer come, the bill is
13 run right up to \$74. In the wintertime, it run all
14 the way down to \$30-something.

15 I don't know what's the problem we all got,
16 because I tell you I don't drink the water. I take
17 a bath – I'm 84 years old. I take a bath, I wash
18 my clothes. I don't have time to go there, water
19 the yard, because I'm too old – you understand?
20 But I'm trying to – can't come to this meeting
21 because I don't know my way here. My friend bring
22 me here, because I can't drive here. And my
23 English is bad, probably, but I'm trying to explain
24 myself the best way I can.

25 Now, when I went to pay my sewage bill, it was

1 \$69. I did not come to the meeting because I
2 couldn't come. When I went to pay it, it was \$81
3 for sewage. I said, "What did it do? \$69 to \$81?"
4 "It's because you didn't come to the meeting." I
5 said, "How I can come to the meeting? I'm half
6 blind in one eye." I don't have nobody to drive me
7 here, you understand?

8 It is very hard for a person to live by
9 herself, and I'm drawing Social Security by myself.
10 And I do – I do – I will wash my clothes with your
11 water. I does not drink your water. Nothing – I
12 don't see anything wrong with the water, but there
13 must be something wrong with it because I don't
14 like the water. So I take bottled water, I drink
15 bottled water.

16 So I don't know what – this is my problem, the
17 summertime it's always high and the wintertime,
18 it's always low. That's my problem right there.

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. Well, thank you,
20 Ms. –

21 **WITNESS:** I explain myself the best way I can,
22 because I'm Spanish, and I don't have a husband to
23 help me do anything, so I have to do everything by
24 myself, cut my grass, do everything by myself, see?
25 So I came down here – for years I spend so many

1 years in the same place. You understand, my mother
2 died in her house. Her car – so I lived here for
3 years. And this problem had come up that this
4 water is getting so high, and the sewage is getting
5 so high, and I don't see them do anything in my
6 yard that you can see where the money goes.

7 That's it. Thank you very much for helping
8 me. I appreciate it for listening.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Well, thank you, Ms.
10 Atkinson. Your English was plenty good enough, I
11 believe, for all of us, and I'm going to see if
12 there are any questions before you step down. But
13 thank you for coming and thank you for your
14 participation. Just one minute, let me see if
15 there are any questions.

16 Mr. Elliott, any questions for this witness?

17 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Mr. Chairman, Ms. Atkinson's
18 English was perfect, but I did not get your
19 address.

20 **WITNESS:** Oh, my address is – I live at 156
21 West Bridge Road. I live in District Two.

22 **MR. ELLIOTT:** Thank you, very much.

23 **WITNESS:** Okay. Thank you very much.

24 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Hang on one second, Ms.
25 Atkinson. One second.

1 Ms. Valtorta, any questions for this witness?

2 MS. VALTORTA: No questions.

3 CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Mr. Nelson, any
4 questions?

5 MR. NELSON: No questions. Thank you for
6 coming out, ma'am. Appreciate it.

7 CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD: Commissioners, any
8 questions for this witness?

9 Ms. Atkinson, if you'll sit one second,
10 Commissioner Fleming has a question for you.

11 WITNESS: Okay.

12 EXAMINATION

13 BY COMMISSIONER FLEMING:

14 Q You said your water bill goes up in the summertime?

15 A Yes, in the summer –

16 Q Do you water –

17 A No, the summertime, it goes down in the summer – no, it
18 go up in the summertime. Yes, yes.

19 Q Do you –

20 A See, I don't water my yard. You get what I'm saying?

21 Q Okay, that was my question, do you water your yard.

22 A No, honey, because I don't have time to water my yard.

23 Q Okay.

24 A I'm telling the truth, I let the rain take care of – the
25 Lord will take care of my yard.

1 **Q** Okay. Well, there are people here –

2 **A** Why is it the water is low in the wintertime, so low in
3 the wintertime, and I still wash clothes, you know, and
4 I don't do – I take a bath. I'm alone there. How much
5 bath do I take, you know, that it goes so high? I'm 84
6 years old, how much bath do I take?

7 **COMMISSIONER FLEMING:** Thank you for coming.

8 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Atkinson.

9 I'm not sure if you heard her, but Commissioner
10 Fleming reminded you there are people here from the
11 company and from Office of Regulatory Staff that
12 could help you tonight. So we thank you for your
13 testimony and thank you for being here, and you may
14 step down now.

15 **WITNESS:** Okay, thank you.

16 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

17 **MR. DONG:** Charles Melton?

18 [Witness affirmed]

19 THEREUPON came,

20 **C H A R L E S M E L T O N ,**

21 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

22 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address
23 for us.

24 **WITNESS:** Yes, my name is Charles Melton. I
25 live at 13 King Arthur Court, Charleswood

1 Subdivision in Northeast Columbia. And I'm
2 definitely here to complain about an increase in
3 this water, which I do not think Carolina Water
4 Service deserves.

5 One of the reasons for that is the water is
6 not drinkable. My wife and I drink water from
7 bottles, Deer Park bottled water. And we have two
8 Chihuahuas; I won't even give them the water. I
9 give the Deer Park bottled water to my dogs also.

10 And in my commode, about every three or four
11 days I have a gray stain in my commode. I have to
12 clean it out, in the commode bowl.

13 And I have been in that subdivision since
14 1973, and the water service is no better now than
15 it was then, when Heater Utilities was the one
16 taking care of the water system. So how in the
17 world could they raise – what would increase, I
18 don't know. I just don't get it. Plus, there's
19 plenty of people in that neighborhood, I'm sure,
20 that could not afford the increase.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Melton, does that
22 conclude your testimony?

23 **WITNESS:** Yes, sir.

24 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, sir.

25 Mr. Elliott, questions for this witness?

1 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions, Mr. Melton.

2 Thanks for coming out.

3 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, questions
4 for this witness?

5 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

6 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson?

7 **CROSS EXAMINATION**

8 **BY MR. NELSON:**

9 **Q** Mr. Melton, thank you for coming. Could you tell me –
10 you were talking about the quality of the water. Could
11 you tell me a little bit? Is it – why don't you like to
12 drink it? Is it cloudy? Does it have a color to it?
13 Does it smell bad? Do you have any particular reason
14 why you don't drink it?

15 **A** Yes. I don't trust it, for one thing, and –

16 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Melton, if you could
17 pull that microphone a little closer?

18 **WITNESS:** Okay [indicating].

19 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Yes, sir.

20 **WITNESS:** Yes, it does have a little smell to
21 it, and I just don't trust it. And, also, in my
22 sink, in the sinks, I have a little green stain in
23 the sinks. You have to clean it more often than
24 you should have to clean it.

25 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.

1 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Nelson.

2 Commissioners, questions of Mr. Melton?

3 [No response]

4 Hearing none, Mr. Melton, thank you for your
5 testimony, and you may step down, sir.

6 **WITNESS:** Thank you, sir.

7 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

8 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Next witness, Mr. Dong.

9 **MR. DONG:** Sue Grossman?

10 [Witness affirmed]

11 THEREUPON came,

12 **S U S A N G R O S S M A N ,**

13 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

14 **MR. RICHARDSON:** State your name and address,
15 please.

16 **WITNESS:** Susan Grossman, 1030 Sandy Oaks
17 Road, in Elgin, South Carolina 29045. However, I
18 have three houses in the Charleswood Subdivision.
19 We did have four for several years, and we sold
20 one. We still have three left.

21 I just wanted to say that in – several of the
22 residents of the Charleswood Subdivision, they've
23 asked me to speak for them, because like one lady,
24 she's had heart surgery, she can't come to the
25 meeting. And she has problems with the water.

1 Most of us don't drink it. You've seen – you've
2 heard from three of our residents. Most of us
3 don't drink the water. We wash our clothes or, you
4 know, flush the toilets, but that's basically about
5 it.

6 I do feel that the water quality has
7 decreased. I've seen, lately, brown water. And I
8 think it does taste bad, also. And I'm against the
9 rate increase.

10 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, Ms. Grossman.
11 Does that conclude your testimony?

12 **WITNESS:** Yes, sir.

13 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Elliott, questions
14 for this witness?

15 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions, Ms. Grossman.
16 Thank you for coming.

17 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta – hang on
18 one second, Ms. Grossman. Ms. Valtorta, any
19 questions for this witness?

20 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson?

22 Ms. Grossman, hang on one second.

23 **CROSS EXAMINATION**

24 **BY MR. NELSON:**

25 **Q** I do have a question for you. Ms. Grossman, do you know

1 where the water comes from that serves the Charleswood
2 Subdivision?

3 **A** I believe there are several wells in the area.

4 **Q** So it's well water that's produced by CWS, then?

5 **A** Yes, sir.

6 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you for coming out, ma'am.
7 But please keep your seat because they might have
8 questions?

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Right. Let me check with
10 Commissioners, and then you can go. I don't know
11 if there are any, but, Commissioners, any questions
12 for Ms. Grossman?

13 [No response]

14 Well, I don't hear any, so you can go this
15 time, Ms. Grossman.

16 **WITNESS:** All right. Thank you.

17 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you for your
18 participation.

19 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

20 **MR. DONG:** Dena Marion_[sic]?

21 [Witness affirmed]

22 THEREUPON came,

23 **D E N A M A R L O W ,**

24 who, having been first duly affirmed, testified as follows:

25 **MR. RICHARDSON:** Please state your name and

1 your address.

2 **WITNESS:** My name is Dena Marlow, M-a-r-l-o-w.
3 209 Sutton Way. I live in Stonegate.

4 Carolina Water has been in Stonegate; I've
5 been there since '93. It's a terrible, terrible
6 company. I can't even believe y'all would even
7 consider giving them an increase. The water, I
8 know you've seen it in the news – if you've watched
9 the news. They've been on WIS and WACH Fox,
10 because of the water quality; the water quality is
11 horrible. You can't drink the water, you know, you
12 can't drink it because it's got a smell to it, it's
13 cloudy, it's discolored. It's got more magnesium
14 than what you – like seven times the limit, I think
15 it was, not too recently that they found out that
16 the quality of the water – it's like we're living
17 in Flint, Michigan, and none of y'all care. I
18 mean, it's ridiculous. It's really ridiculous that
19 any and every one of y'all allow this, and y'all
20 and Carolina Water is actually able to sleep at
21 night, for the water quality that y'all allow for
22 them to deliver to anyone on earth. It's
23 disgusting, the way that they – I don't know what
24 it, if it's the pipes – one of you asked about it.
25 We have copper pipes. We were built in the '70s.

1 No one was out in that area, so no one wanted to go
2 out there. Now we have Columbia Water, and now
3 they want to do – what is that – a reconnect, or
4 whatever, or something. Then they're going to try
5 to charge us more money.

6 They have raped us for years with their price
7 increases, and none of y'all care. None of you
8 care about our dishwashers we've had to replace,
9 because of the quality of the water. I've got a
10 picture on my phone I could show you right now,
11 because of Carolina Water. Because of the
12 magnesium and the iron in the water, you can't wash
13 your whites. You can't have a white shirt. You
14 have to go buy new white shirts, because you can't
15 keep them clean. It's ridiculous.

16 And for y'all to sit there and actually allow
17 them to make a Petition – and, yes, I've called the
18 Office of Regulatory before. I've called anyone
19 and everyone that you can tell me to call, I will
20 call. Anyone and everyone that I can go above
21 y'all, if y'all grant it, I would do it. Whatever
22 my recourse is, because that is absolutely
23 outrageous. The money that they charge, the things
24 that they do, and y'all continue to allow that.
25 And it's ridiculous. Sorry. Y'all don't have to

1 like it at all, but I don't like the fact that
2 y'all allow Carolina Water to deliver such poor
3 quality.

4 I wish it went to every one of your houses and
5 y'all had to drink it, y'all had to bathe in it,
6 had to wash your clothes in it, I guarantee you'd
7 have a different approach to Carolina Water. Every
8 one of you would.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Marlow, does that
10 conclude your testimony?

11 **WITNESS:** Yes.

12 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Elliott, any
13 questions for this witness?

14 **MR. ELLIOTT:** No questions for Ms. Marlow.

15 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Ms. Valtorta, any
16 questions for Ms. Marlow?

17 **MS. VALTORTA:** No questions.

18 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Mr. Nelson, any questions
19 for Ms. Marlow?

20 **MR. NELSON:** I would say, can you please come
21 talk to us – myself or Ms. Belser – once we get
22 done here?

23 **WITNESS:** Uh-huh.

24 **MR. NELSON:** If you don't mind hanging around,
25 I'd love to talk to you.

1 **WITNESS:** Yeah, sure.

2 **MR. NELSON:** Thanks for testifying, too.

3 **WITNESS:** No problem.

4 I have a question: I'd like to know, in the
5 event that y'all do give them an actual increase,
6 so what are my recourses? Are y'all going to – can
7 anyone tell me? Y'all can tell me that later?

8 **MR. NELSON:** I can.

9 **WITNESS:** Okay. Just wanted to ask.

10 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** I would suggest you talk
11 to Mr. Nelson. He and his staff can answer your
12 questions, just like anyone else in the room, after
13 the hearing.

14 Any Commissioner questions for Ms. Marlow?

15 [No response]

16 Well, if not, thank you for your
17 participation, Ms. Marlow, and you may step down.

18 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

19 Mr. Dong, next witness.

20 **MR. DONG:** We're done.

21 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Okay. Mr. Dong tells me
22 that that is our last witness tonight. This is one
23 of many public night hearings we've had. Our
24 merits hearing, as he stated earlier, is April 3rd,
25 I believe, here, and there will be a full-blown

1 case here then. There will be another opportunity
2 for public comment, if you have not already spoken.
3 And with that, thank you for your participation –
4 yes, sir, Mr. Nelson.

5 **MR. NELSON:** Before you close, Mr. Chairman, I
6 would ask that the sign-in sheets that were signed
7 by the participants tonight please be entered into
8 the record of this case.

9 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thanks for your reminder,
10 Mr. Nelson, and that will be so ordered, and we
11 will make the sign-in sheets that you requested
12 tonight as Hearing Exhibit No. 6.

13 **MR. NELSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 **CHAIRMAN WHITFIELD:** Thank you, sir. And
15 hearing adjourned.

16 [WHEREUPON, at 8:10 p.m., the hearing in
17 the above-entitled matter was adjourned.]

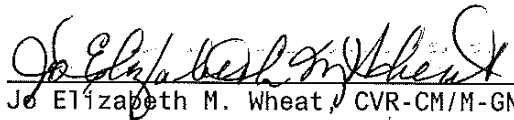
18 _____
19 [WHEREUPON, Hearing Exhibit No. 6 was
20 marked and received in evidence.]
21 _____

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-CM-GNSC, Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina, do hereby certify that the foregoing is, to the best of my skill and ability, a true and correct transcript of all the proceedings had and testimony adduced in a hearing held in the above-captioned matter before the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA;

That the witnesses appearing during said hearing were sworn or affirmed to state the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, on this the 1st day of April, 2018.


Jo Elizabeth M. Wheat, CVR-CM/M-GNSC
Hearings Reporter, PSC/SC
My Commission Expires: January 27, 2021.